

SPECIFICATION

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Franchise Business System of Retail Stores with Internet

BACK GROUND OF THE INVENTION

The Invention, regarding electronic shopping system of franchise system by retailers, shall be included in the technology field of Electronic Commerce (EC) with Internet. In various industries recently, companies and stores create virtual stores with Home Pages in Internet, and through them, they receive purchase orders.

Incidentally, in this type of electronic shopping system, it is very important to create Home Pages, which will be attractive to common consumers and that will be able to stimulate consumers' purchasing desires. Further more, it is necessary to present every time a variety of goods, enough to satisfy the high and different demands of the consumers.

Needless to say, the cost required in order to create effective Home Pages and maintain them is much higher for medium/small sized enterprises or retail shops, than for big companies. The introduction of such a system is hard for them, since the range of the goods to be displayed is limited. Even if they decide to start the EC System on their own, it may be difficult to obtain satisfactory effects. Therefore, we have thought about the practical franchise system for music records retailers.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Music record retailers shall get together and organize a Franchise System, which will establish the Headquarter for Internet business. Also, the Headquarter will set up the Server for Internet (hereafter, referred to as " H. Server.") . Both Franchise

Stores and the Members collected by Franchise Stores individually will have each Server (hereafter, referred to as " F. Server" and "M. Server" respectively.) connected with H. Server via Internet. H. Server shall consist of the following data and systems.

Merchandise Information Memory Data, will be gathering information of various goods (hereafter, referred to "Goods") including records, CD, MD, Music Tape, Video Tape and DVD, etc. which are sold by Franchise Stores.

Home Page Creation System, will be realized through several ways: the system will be able to read the Merchandise Information Memory Data and get all the necessary merchandise information. At the same time, it will be able, through each Store's Home page Data Memory System, to collect each Store's Home Page Data, as well as the Franchise Store ID System.

Home Page Sending Service, will be used in order to send the Home Page, including information, gathered from Merchandise Information Memory Data.

Order Receiving System, will facilitate the realization of orders from the Members, through the Home Page.

Received Data Transfer System, will enable the transfer of the Order Data (received by the Order Receiving System), to the "F. Server" identified by Member Store ID System. The order data will be including the buyer's name and the ordered items.

Franchise Store ID System will facilitate the identification of a franchise store to which the Members concerned belong, with the time that Members or non-Members have accessed. The System shall identify the Franchise Store to which the Member concerned belong, based on the URL set up in advance according to the defined rules.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

We explain how the Invention is executed as follows;

A. Figure 1 shows the structure outline of electronic shopping system concerned with

the Invention. The System 1 consists of H. Server 10 owned by the Headquarter of Franchise System, F. Server 20-20 (only one is in the Figure) owned by the Franchise Stores of the Franchise System, M. Server 30-30 (only one is in the Figure) owned by the Members collected by the Franchise Stores and Internet 40 connecting all of them.

B. In H. Server 10, various Data Bases are equipped. Among them, Data Base 11 is Goods Master in which all merchandise data, such as records/CD/other goods related with the System, are cataloged. The contents 12-12 are packaged to classify such entered goods in Master 11 into, for example, musician group, music category group and best sellers group, etc.

C. Data Base 13 is the data base for Member Entry, where the members collected by each member store in Franchise System are cataloged. Concretely speaking, as shown in Fig. 2, for every member, the ID No., Password, Franchise Store Code, Branch Code (if the member belongs to the certain branch of the Franchise Store), Terminal ID Code called "Cookie" used by H. Server to identify if the member's Server 30 are entered. Data Base 14 is the data base for Franchise Store entry. As shown in Fig. 3, as the data of every Franchise Store, Store Code and Branch Code (if any) are entered. When the Franchise Agreement has made between the Store and the Headquarter, such data is cataloged in Franchise Store Data Base 14 of H. Server.

D. Data Base 15 is for entering the Home Page data of each Franchise Store. As shown in Fig. 4, for instance, the Home Data including the store name logos used in creating Home Page, Figures for Home Pages and Branch List of Franchise Stores, etc. are entered.

E. In excess, we explain the operating procedure of the Franchise Business System, concerning the execution, according to the Flow Chart of Fig. 5. The Flow Chart shows the communication between M. Server 30 and H. Server 10. When you use the System, a Member shall make its own M. Server 30 (PC) connect via the provider using the phone cable first (Step S1) in order to activate Internet Browser. Then, the Member shall input the URL obtained in advance to access the System concerned (Step S3). In such a case, there are two kinds of URLs--- the one is common in the whole system and the other is classified by each Franchise Store. For example, let's look at the [http://www.abc. xyz.co.jp](http://www.abc.xyz.co.jp), which is for the Franchise Store. The part of " abc"

identifies the Member Store, while the URL without "abc" is used commonly in the whole System. In any case, the Member shall be connected with H. Server 10 by "xyz.co.jp." (Step S4). At that time, H. Server 10 shall judge whether the access is the first or the second one and so on, by confirming the Terminal ID Code added to the Server in the Member's first access from Server 30 (Step S5). If it is the first access, Member ID No. and Password are requested to be added. The H. Server shall recognize whether the access is from the Member or not, by comparing such input data with the Members' Data cataloged in Member's Data Base 13. (Step S6, S7).

F. In that step, the above Member ID No. and Password had been obtained by the Members when they applied for the entry at the Franchise Store and such data had been cataloged in Member Data Base 13 of H. Server 10, based on the notice from the Store. When such an ID No. or Password is different from what has been cataloged, or when there was no input, H. Server judges that the access is from non-members and displays the Home Page for guests (Step S8). However, when the Server judges that the input Member ID No. and Password are what has already been entered, and that the access from M. Server 30 is the second one (or third, fourth one), the H. Server 10 has to decide whether or not the above URL is the specific one for each Member Store. (Step S9). If there is not "abc" part in the input URL and it is impossible to specify the Member Store by the URL, then, the H. Server demands the Client 30 again to input for identifying the Membership, based on Member Data Base 13, in order to recognize to which Member Store, the Member who has accessed, belongs. (Step S10).

G. Thus, having confirmed the Membership and Member Store, H. Server 10 shall next read the Home Page Data for Store Name Logo and Figures, shown in Fig. 4 for example, from Data Base 15 for Home Page. Then, it shall create a Home Page for the Member Store concerned, using the Data and Merchandise Data read out from Goods Master 11 and various contents 12---12, and shall send the Home Page to M. Server 30 (Step S11). Moreover, it shall obtain the Purchase Order Data including the Member's ID No., ordered goods, delivery way, how to receive the money , when M. Server 30 has processed a purchase order.(Step S12) In this way, when the order from a Member belonging to a Franchise Store has been received and processed, H. Server 10 shall transfer the received order data to F. Server 20 via Internet, including E-mails.

H. The Member Store, which has received it shall deliver the goods and receive the